

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 7 May 2023  
**Sermon Title** : Together Again  
**Speaker** : Rev John Foo  
**Text** : Psalm 122:1-5

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Ever since the Covid epidemic, even after all the safe management measures had been removed, it is still difficult to get everyone back in church. Some may still be wary about the Covid pandemic while others may feel the inertia in coming back to worship in person. It may also be because of how we view coming to church on Sundays.

Some reasons why people come to church for Sunday Worship Service:

- a) Some feel that coming to church is compulsory. However, if they could, they would rather to be somewhere else.
- b) Some come for the sermon. They want to hear clever sermons and are those we call 'sermon hunters'.
- c) Some come not to receive instructions from the sermon but to criticise and judge the preachers.
- d) Some come regularly until it becomes a habit and routine. No one, not even the pastor, can ever tell them that there will be no Service on a Sunday.

## **Psalm 122**

The first five verses of this psalm give the scenario of God's people going together to Jerusalem, to the house of the Lord, to worship Him. This is very much like how we come together to worship God every Sunday.

## **Two reasons for going to the house of the Lord together to worship God (Psalm 122:1-5)**

### **Reason #1: There is joy in coming together to worship the Lord. (vv.1-2)**

- The psalmist was glad and overwhelmingly joyful when others called him to go to the house of the Lord. He did not go to the house of God grudgingly as there would be no joy if he felt being forced to go to worship God. The rest were also joyful when calling him, so they were calling one another joyfully to go to the house of the Lord.
  - ❖ Being joyful is the best attitude to have when going to the house of the Lord to worship Him.

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*For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7*

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- The psalmist's joy came even before he crossed the threshold of the house of the Lord. (v.1) Joy came way before stepping into the house of God and he was joyful while on the way, preparing to go to worship.
  - ❖ Our readiness to worship begins before Sunday

There are two sources of joy:

- (I) **Being in the house of God** – Verse 2 talks about them being joyful standing within Jerusalem. Because the people then associated Jerusalem with the centre of worship, being in Jerusalem was like being in the house of God. The psalmist expressed his longing to be in the presence of the Lord in His sanctuary and feeling joyful to be congregating together as His people.
- (II) **There is greater joy in coming together to worship God** – In verse 1, the others said, "Let us go...". This means they want to worship God together because they were not just telling each other to go. They all have the same desire and joy to come together to worship God. There is greater joy in coming together to worship God in a crowd when everybody is worshipping God together, it lifts us up.

**Reason #2: In the house of the Lord, God's people celebrate their unity and yet appreciate their differences. (Psalm 122:3-5)**

In Jerusalem all the 12 different tribes of Israel gathered together even though they were not staying in one place.

- God's chosen people were scattered throughout the entire land managing their own issues and problems but they would come together because they had one common focal point – Jerusalem. They would congregate in Jerusalem during their prescribed annual feast days. (vv.3-4)
- Verse 5 tells us that the same thrones of judgment were set for every tribe coming from the house of David, their earthly king.
- The worship of their One same God, Yahweh, brought them together; the same God who rules from His throne of judgment from His dwelling which is in Jerusalem.

They came together to celebrate their unity despite their differences – gathering as one to worship God. They knew their differences, but they came to celebrate their unity.

- ❖ We come together not to hold on to our differences but to celebrate our unity.

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## **Together in Corporate Worship**

Just because we huddle in one place to worship God does not make it corporate worship. We can gather to worship together but still worship God individually when we choose to sit alone being segregated from others during corporate worship. Individual worship is good and must be practised on our own but when we gather together in worship, it should be a corporate worship.

- Corporate worship only happens when there is unity.
- At the liturgical element of “Call to Worship” we should drop everything as individuals and come together as one united people to worship God. It is the corporate call to worship.
- If we do not feel bonded to one another, we fail in corporate worship. The same shed blood of Jesus is for all of us, so we should have unity in the same faith, love and hope.

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we need each other with our differences to spur one another on in growing in Christ and sharpening each other. The body of Christ has many members, but we are one.

- ❖ When there is unity, our worship is acceptable in the eyes of our Heavenly Father.

## **CONCLUSION**

When we come together in the house of God to worship together, there is greater joy, and we can celebrate our unity yet appreciate our differences which spur us to grow in Christ and help us to sharpen one another. This corporate worship can only happen when we are bonded to one another in faith, love and hope in the blood of Christ which was shed for all of us. Let us call each other to the house of the Lord to worship together, so that like the psalmist, our joy can begin even before we cross the threshold of the house of the Lord on Sundays.

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## **A. Review Sermon Application**

***Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.***

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk?
  - 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?
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2. Since hearing this sermon, has your attitude towards coming to the house of God for corporate worship changed? If yes, how has it changed?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

3. Read Psalm 122:1-5 slowly and reflectively.
  - a. (i) What is/are your reason(s) for going to the house of God for corporate worship?
    - (ii) Is/Are your reason(s) aligned to what has been preached?
  - b. (i) How glad or joyful are you whenever you go to the house of God for corporate worship?
    - (ii) What is/are hindering you from experiencing greater joy in the house of God?
  
4. 'The psalmist's joy was there even before he crossed the threshold of the house of the Lord'.
  - a. What are some ways you and your group members can encourage each other to experience joy even before you enter the house of the Lord on Sundays?
    - (i) What would be observed in a church that truly celebrates unity and appreciates differences in one another?
      - (ii) What can your group members do to help or encourage one another to celebrate our unity and appreciate our differences in our church?

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## **C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action**

***Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.***

5. Share how someone has encouraged you to be joyful in preparing to go to the house of God to worship Him together as a body of Christ.

OR

Give thanks to God for the joy you experience in His presence when you come together to worship Him.

6. Reflect on your attitude towards coming together to worship God in His house. Hear what God has to say to you and respond to Him.

Take time to pray for one another on all that have been shared and ask the Holy Spirit to help you experience that greater joy in coming together as one body to worship God. Pray also for our church to truly be one that celebrates our unity in faith, hope and love while appreciating our differences.

### Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. House of the Lord – Phil Wickham <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqfV0zeEvT8>
2. Mighty to Save – Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCZ3Kcl4uEQ>
3. The God I Know – City Harvest Church <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTA7mlgj9ZY>

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